

CLAIMS

1. An asynchronous transfer mode method of transmitting digital signals in which terminals (16, 18) send to the same station (20), calls are transmitted by cells (40, 5 42, 44, 46), said terminals send successively in separate periods (60, 62, 64, 66; 70, 72, 74), and each cell is assigned at least two orthogonal codes (C1, C2, C3, C4), characterized in that the duration of the period during which each terminal sends and/or the number of codes 10 assigned to each terminal and/or the number of symbols assigned a particular code in a terminal can be selected on each sending as a function of a particular power level (80).

2. A method according to claim 1, characterized in that 15 a guard interval (52, 54; 56, 58) is provided between the end of sending by one terminal and the start of the next sending by another terminal.

*Sub
A5* → 3. A method according to either claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that if a terminal sends during a given 20 time period (70), that period is uninterrupted.

4. The use of the method according to any preceding claim in a telecommunication system in which the terminals (16, 18) communicate with the station (20) via a satellite, for example a non-geosynchronous satellite.

25 5. A method according to claim 4, characterized in that the duration of the period of sending by each terminal and/or the number of codes assigned to that terminal are chosen as a function of its position relative to the station (20).